

REMARKS

By this Amendment, claims 6, 7 and 24-28 are amended. Claims 6, 7 and 24 are amended to include patentable limitations. Claims 25-28 are amended to provide correct dependency. Claims 1-5 and 8-23 remain as originally filed. Accordingly, claims 1-28 remain pending in the application.

Allowable Subject Matter

Pursuant to the Office Action, claims 9-23 stand allowed and claims 3, 4 and 6-8 stand objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Applicants gratefully acknowledge the Examiner's indication of the allowed and allowable claims with the accompanying statement of reasons for the indication of allowable subject matter. Allowable claims 6 and 7 have been rewritten in independent form as suggested by the Examiner. Allowable claims 3 and 4 depend indirectly from patentable base claim 1, as will be described, and therefore are likewise allowable as originally presented. Allowable claim 8 depends directly from patentable base claim 7 (as amended herein), and therefore is likewise allowable as originally presented. Accordingly, Applicants submit that claims 1-4 and 6-28 are allowable for the reasons stated herein and respectfully request the Examiner to issue a Notice of Allowability for the pending claims.

Claim Rejections – 35 U.S.C. §102

Pursuant to the Office Action, claims 24-28 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by Japanese Patent No. 9-197157. The Examiner asserts that the Japanese reference teaches "an optical fiber connector structure 1 for connecting optical fibers 7 in a holder or body 4 for connecting optical fibers or fiber stubs and a view port(s) 16, 17, 18 which the quality of the splice can be viewed giving a visual indicator when light from a laser or LED is passed through the splice," and thus, fully meets the claim limitations of the rejected claims.

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Office Action at page 3.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection, while reserving the right to present evidence and arguments that the elements 16, 17, 18 depicted in the Japanese reference do not constitute a view port through which a visual indication of the quality of a splice can be viewed. Independent claim 24 has been amended herein to include the patentable limitations of allowable claim 7. In particular, claim 24 has been amended to include the further limitations that the fiber optic connector is provided with a housing having an inner surface defining a cavity extending longitudinally therethrough, a ferrule holder disposed at least partially within the cavity, a ferrule disposed at least partially within the ferrule holder with the first optical fiber disposed at least partially within the ferrule, *and a cam member disposed about the ferrule holder*. Accordingly, claim 24 is allowable for at least the same reasons as claim 7. Claims 25-28 have been amended to depend directly from patentable base claim 24, and thus, are likewise allowable for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claims 24-28 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b).

Pursuant to the Office Action, claims 1, 2 and 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by United States Patent No. 6,540,410 (Childers et al.). The Examiner asserts that Childers et al. teaches “an optical fiber connector comprising: a housing 22 with a cavity into which is placed a spring element 28 and spring element seat 30, 31 and a ferrule 34, ferrule spring 38 and ferrule holder 40 all of which are inserted into the housing 22,” and thus, fully meets the claim limitations of the rejected claims. Office Action at page 4.

Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection. With respect to independent claim 1, Childers et al. does not identically disclose (or even arguably suggest) the claimed spring element inserted into the cavity (of the housing) *through the forward opening of the housing*. In Childers et al., the inner housing 24 and the ferrule assembly 26 (comprising ferrule 34, ferrule holder 36, ferrule spring 38 and crimp body 40) are assembled and inserted into the rear of the outer housing 22. See column 4, lines 27-30, column 5, lines 11-14 and FIGS. 3-4. “The main spring 28 is then inserted *into the rear end of the outer housing 22* and over the tubular rear end of the

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crimp body 40 until the spring abuts an annular flange 52 formed on the crimp body.” Column 5, lines 18-21 and FIGS. 3-4 (emphasis added). Thus, claim 1 is patentable for at least this reason. Dependent claim 2 further requires a spring element retainer *disposed about a forward end of the ferrule holder*. In Childers et al., “the spring retainer 30 is inserted into the rear end of the outer housing 22. The spring retainer is a generally cup-shaped body whose forward end receives the rear end of the main spring 28.” Column 5, lines 22-26. The forward end of the main spring 28 engages the flange 52 on the crimp body 40 (column 5, lines 20-21) and “the tubular crimp body in turn fits *over the rear end of the ferule holder* 36 and the ferrule spring 38” (column 4, lines 65-66). Accordingly, Childers et al. does not identically disclose the claimed front-loading optical fiber connector and claim 2 is patentable for at least this additional reason. Furthermore, claims 2 and 5 depend directly from patentable base claim 1, and thus, are likewise allowable for at least the same reasons. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejection of claims 1, 2 and 5 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e).

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CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing amendments and these remarks, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to withdraw the rejections to the claims and to reconsider the application. This Amendment is fully responsive to the Office Action and places the application in condition for immediate allowance. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request the Examiner to issue a Notice of Allowability for the pending claims 1-28. Applicants encourage the Examiner to contact the undersigned directly to further the prosecution of any remaining issues, and thereby expedite allowance of the application.

This Amendment results in two (2) more independent claims than paid for previously. Accordingly, a fee for excess independent claims in the amount of \$400 and a fee for excess total claims in the amount of \$100 are believed to be due. The Examiner is hereby authorized to charge any fee due in connection with the filing of this response, including any fees for excess claims, to Deposit Account No. 19-2167. If a fee is required for an extension of time under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 not already accounted for, such an extension is requested and the fee should likewise be charged to Deposit Account No. 19-2167. Any overpayment should be credited to Deposit Account No. 19-2167.

Respectfully submitted,

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